DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 144 659 95 JC 770 472

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TITLE Operational Incentives and the Growth of Competition in the Education Sector.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Finance and Productivity Group.
BUREAU NO P76-0303
PUB DATE Feb 77
NOTE 56p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$3.50 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Policy; Adult Basic Education; *Adult Education; Adult Students; Community Colleges; *Educational Finance; Educational Legislation; *Interinstitutional Cooperation; *Junior Colleges; Program Development; School Community Relationship; *Secondary Education; *State Legislation; Student Characteristics
IDENTIFIERS *California; California Senate Bill 1641

ABSTRACT

The level of competition between secondary adult education and community college programs, and the effects of duplication of services upon finances was the focus of this California study. Three geographic areas were selected to represent high inter-institutional cooperation, moderate competition, and intense competition. Key administrative personnel were interviewed and related documents were examined. Findings revealed that: (1) institutions tended to develop programs in isolation; (2) course offerings were not modified as a result of the initiation of competitive programs; (3) the student recruitment pool was similar; (4) students tended to be disproportionately white, middle-class, female, and more educated than the general population; (5) conflicts emerged from invasion of institutional "territory," but were not harmful because of the large student pool; (6) alternative adult programs increased overall adult enrollments; and (7) there was little "unnecessary duplication" since classes were either filled or cancelled, although community college costs were higher than those of secondary adult programs. Legislation pertaining to this area is discussed, as are the effects of SB1641 on finance formulas for community college enrollment growth and decline. (RT)

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OPERATIONAL INCENTIVES AND THE GROWTH OF COMPETITION IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

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JC 770 472

National Institute of Education
Finance and Productivity Group
Purchase Order No. P76-0303

February, 1977

Many educational constitutions are stepping up recruitment of "nontraditional" students, especially adults, and are expanding programs and classes oriented to the particular concerns of adults. Between 1969 and 1972, for example, enrollments of adult part-time students in postsecondary education institutions in the U.S. increased more than twice as fast as did those of full-time students and, by some measures, now constitute a majority of those in postsecondary education institutions (American Council on Education, 1974). In expanding adult-oriented enrollments and services, institutions are responding both to the operating pressures and financial incentives which face many of them and to their sense of institutional mission.

Static or declining enrollment levels among traditional age groups are confronting many educational institutions. Nation wide, enrollments in regular elementary and secondary schools declined from 51.3 million in fall 1970 to 49.8 million in fall 1974; they are expected to drop to 44.8 million by 1984. Although overall higher education enrollments are generally expected to increase until the mid-1980's (but much more slowly than in the past), many colleges and universities are already feeling enrollment declines (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1976a). These enrollment trends are pressuring many institutions to expand adult enrollments in order to avoid (or at least limit) staff lay-offs. Inflationary pressures on regular programs also are prompting institutions to expand adult-oriented classes. Because many adult-oriented classes cost less to operate (since many are taught by lower-paid part-time staff), such classes may provide excess funds for the support of regular programs hit by rising costs. The incentive to expand lower-cost adult classes is especially strong when enrollments in

these classes are eligible for public subsidies greater than the costs of educating the students.

Needs and demands for further education for adults are increasing, and many institutions, particularly those which define themselves as "open-door" institutions, are strongly committed to serving these demands. Growing job retraining needs in a changing job market, reentry of women into the work force, a rise in educational expectations, and growth in leisure time are among the pressures creating greater demand for adult education. Carp et al. (1974) estimate that 80 million adults in the United States would like to undertake some type of further learning. In addition, the children of the post-World War II "baby boom" are now entering the ranks of young adults (under age 35) in the population, and it is this age group which engages in adult learning activities more often than any other age category (Carp et al., 1974).

One result of increased recruitment of (and dependence upon) adult students might be greater competition and conflict among the many institutions seeking out adults. Because programs for adults cover a broad range that is difficult to define, division of responsibilities among institutions has not been clearly drawn in this area. Conflicts over "turf" would therefore seem likely. Increases in competition and conflict would seem to be particularly likely between high school adult programs and community colleges, since in many states these institutions already serve a somewhat overlapping adult clientele in classes that often receive significant state and local aid.

The projection of increased competition and conflict among institutions raises a number of research and policy questions:

- Are high school adult programs and community colleges in fact competing for the same students?
- At a time when state and local budgets for education are constrained, is there unnecessary duplication of publicly-supported programs serving adults, and therefore inefficient use of public dollars?
- What seem to be the major influences which affect the development of competition or conflict over adult enrollments?
- Does competition appear to affect who is served by adult-oriented programs or what types of programs and courses are offered?
- Should the state respond to indications of increased competition, conflict, or duplication among institutions?

California presented an opportunity to explore the problem of conflict and competition for adults between high school adult schools[1)] and community colleges under conditions of fiscal incentive and static or declining enrollments.

State-supported adult-oriented enrollments increased sharply in the past few years in California both in adult schools and community colleges. Between 1970-71 and 1974-75, average daily attendance (A.D.A.)[2)] of students in high school adult classes in California increased 66 percent, to total 165,773 A.D.A. in the second principal apportionment period (California Legislative Analyst, 1976).[3)] In California's community colleges, "defined adult"[4)] A.D.A. grew 58 percent (to 138,047) between 1970-71 and 1974-75. However, A.D.A. in ungraded "classes for adults" in the community colleges dropped during this period (but then rose slightly in 1975-76, to total 61,537 A.D.A.) (California Legislative Analyst, 1976, and unpublished data supplied by the California Community Colleges, Office of the Chancellor). On the other hand, attendance in regular day programs

of elementary and secondary schools in California declined about four percent statewide between 1970-71 and 1975-76; many school districts, of course, had larger declines (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1971 and 1976b).

Testimony of institutional spokespersons before special legislative committees during this period documents the presence of conflict between adult schools and community colleges (and between school districts and community colleges) in several regions of California; however, in other regions of the state conflict was less evident (California Legislature, 1975a and 1975b).

Because the California Legislature passed several pieces of legislation designed to curb the growth of adult enrollments or reduce "unnecessary duplication" between institutions, the California situation also presented an opportunity to study how state legislative action appeared to affect competition and conflict between institutions.

Study Design

A short-term effort to assess the development and perceived impact of adult school-community college conflict and competition for adult enrollments in three differing geographic areas in California was conducted during summer and fall, 1976. The study was limited to relationships between community colleges and adult schools since initial interviews confirmed the earlier assumption that overlap, conflict, and potential competition for adults were greatest between these two education sectors. (Other types of institutions did not pose much competitive threat to the adult schools or community colleges largely because adult programs in these other institutions were required to be self-supporting.)

Three areas in California were selected to exemplify what the authors anticipated would be differing levels of adult school-community college competition over adult enrollments. In our selection of these areas, several state agency staff members who work with community colleges and adult schools were asked to identify areas in which inter-institutional cooperation in serving adults was high, those in which there was a moderate degree of competition, and those in which competition for adult enrollments was intense. Because these agency personnel worked with institutions in different sections of the state, they often nominated different areas for the three categories; however, an effort was made to select those areas named by more than one expert. Each area to be examined included a community college and the adult schools and school districts which were within the locale of the community college. In addition, the three areas were chosen to provide a geographic spread across the state.

For this study, we defined "competition" as attempts by two or more institutions to recruit the same clientele. "Overlap" was defined as the offering by institutions of duplicative program or course coverage, regardless of whether or not a similar clientele is served. By "conflict" we mean the presence of suspicion and antagonism between institutions over values and claims to "turf" which produce efforts by the institutions to "neutralize, injure, or eliminate" the other party (Coser, 1956, p. 8). These terms are necessarily subjective. (Thus, some respondents in the study perceived competition and course overlap between them and another institution while often those in the other institution argued that they recruited different students and offered courses which differed in level or target audience and therefore were not really overlapping.) The study sought to undertake the following tasks:

- To determine the extent to which institutional administrators perceived conflict, competition, and duplication between their own and other institutions, in the provision of educational services for adults.
- To delineate those factors which appeared to affect the development of differing levels of inter-institutional conflict or competition among the three regions. In particular, to assess the perceived influence of declining enrollments and of state legislation, on conflict and competition.
- To examine the relationship between the level of competition or conflict among institutions and the pattern of service provided, that is, the nature of the programs offered and the kinds of students served.
- To recommend appropriate state government response to inter-institutional competition, based on the findings of the study.
- To propose a policy-relevant research agenda for the future.

Analysis of the development and perceived effect of competition and conflict in each of the three cases was based primarily on interviews conducted during early fall of 1976 with key administrative personnel in the community colleges and adult schools. These interviewees included adult school principals and directors, and community college presidents and staff members with direct responsibility for continuing education, adult education, or community services programs at the colleges. A few additional interviews were conducted with city/county vocational education spokespersons and four-year institution representatives in the three regions and with adult school and community college representatives in

three other areas of the state. To help determine the kinds of programs and classes being offered, catalogs, brochures, schedules of classes, and other institutional documents were examined.

For purposes of the study, adult students were defined as all students enrolled in the adult schools (or in other high school "classes for adults") as well as those persons in community college programs who were not seeking to acquire a college degree or certificate; and adult programs were considered to be all those offered by adult schools and those community college classes which primarily enrolled adult students, as defined above. Although these definitions made determining the actual number of adult students and programs impossible, since they were based on the unknown motives of community college students, they were chosen because other more measurable definitions were quite unsatisfactory. In the California community colleges, neither enrollment in regular college degree-credit classes, nor age, full-time/part-time status, nor day vs. evening attendance serve to differentiate "regular" students from "adults". Just under half of all California community college students (by headcount) are enrolled in evening classes (after 4:30 p.m.). Most of them are presumed to be working toward traditional degree or certificate objectives and many students enroll in both day and evening classes. Nearly three-fourths of all California community college students attend part-time, and over half of all students are 25 years of age or older (California Community Colleges, 1975). At the same time, many individuals not seeking college degrees or certificates enroll in college credit classes alongside those students who are seeking them. A study undertaken for the California Postsecondary Education Commission (1976) found that a significant number of students who enroll in regular credit classes in

California community colleges "come with their own objectives relating to educational, career, and personal growth which are often achieved outside degree and certificate programs" (p. i). And programs and classes that once might have been considered "adult education" (such as general home repair or "you and the law" classes) are now part of the regular, graded curriculum. By contrast, the definitions which we have chosen are based on the criteria which school administrators have in mind when they argue that a course is or is not "adult."

One major limitation which became apparent only after the study was underway was the almost total absence of statistical data on the characteristics of adult students enrolled in the programs under examination -- regardless of which criteria were used in defining "adult." Even when only students in "classes for adults" in the adult schools and community colleges were considered, data were absent. Not only were there no data on the ethnicity or income levels of adult students, there was little or no information concerning the levels of formal education acquired by adult students or their goals and purposes in enrolling in courses. Thus, except on the basis of the perceptions of administrators, the study was unable to determine who is being served by the adult-oriented programs or whether competition affects the enrollment of particular groups of individuals, such as ethnic minorities, the low-income, or those interested in avocational pursuits. In explaining why such data were unavailable, administrators of these programs argued that federal antidiscrimination or privacy laws made them wary of collecting such information;[5] that the kinds of students enrolled changed too rapidly for any surveys to be of value; that (in the community colleges) the institution considered all students as adults and therefore

did not collect separate statistics on those in particular programs; or that there was simply "no point" in collecting the information.

Background of the Study: Adult Education Overlap And Legislation in California

Program Overlap Between Institutions

California state law permits considerable overlap (and thus potential conflict) between school districts and community colleges in the provision of "classes for adults"[6] (generally referred to as "adult education" classes). These are classes, which receive both state and local funding and do not award college credit. Under "adult education," the state's Education Code gives both school districts and community college districts the right to offer: (1) vocational and occupational training and retraining programs for adults, and (2) "adult continuing education" programs, which include, but are not limited to, "parent education, consumer education, civic education, education in special fields, and education in the arts and humanities." (School districts have the responsibility to provide adult basic education and high school diploma programs, unless by mutual agreement that responsibility is assigned to the community college district.) (Education Code, Sections 45040-45043.)[7]

In addition, both school and community college districts are entitled to offer "community service" programs, which are funded by local taxes (and/or student fees) and are ineligible for state aid. Community service programs are generally avocational and recreational and include expenditures for such non-instructional purposes as building and maintaining swimming pools.

In practice, the extent of overlap between school and community college adult programs varies widely across the state. In some areas of the state, such as in Los Angeles, all "classes for adults" are offered through the school districts. In other areas, such as in San Francisco, all adult education programs, including adult basic education and high school diploma programs, are under the jurisdiction of the community college district. Yet, as noted above, even where the community college offers no noncredit "classes for adults," overlap between the adult schools and the community college in the offering of programs oriented to the special interests and needs of adults may be considerable. In fact, the California Postsecondary Education Commission study concluded that, because so many students who enrolled in regular credit classes in the community colleges do not have degree or certificate objectives, "continuing education for part-time adult students has become the dominant function of the Community Colleges..." (p.i.).

Recent State Legislation

Several pieces of state legislation are particularly relevant to the question of the impact of state legislative action on inter-institutional competition and conflict over adult enrollments:

Senate Bill 90 (Chapter 1138, Statutes of 1972) and Senate Bill 6 (Chapter 209, Statutes of 1973): These bills, the first directed to the public school system and the second to the community colleges, altered state-local financing mechanisms. The bills permitted local funding to increase with increased enrollments, including those of adults, whereas before local funding had been based on fixed maximum tax rates on assessed property value. The bills also increased the amount of state funds which

districts received for enrolling new students. At a time of heavy inflationary pressures on school and college budgets; declining enrollments in some school districts; and increasing interest by adults in continuing their education, the bills helped prompt institutions to expand low-cost adult enrollments. The result was large increases in both state and local costs for adult education.

The 1975-76 Budget "Cap". In the state budget for 1975-76, a "cap" (or limit) of 105 percent was placed on "adult education" average daily attendance, per district, which was eligible for state funding. Here, "adult education" was defined to include all students in the community colleges and regional occupational center/programs, as well as all those in adult schools and other high school adult classes. Thus, state funding was provided for only five percent more A.D.A. than the state had supported in 1974-75. Since at the time it was estimated that A.D.A. increases would have reached 18 percent in the community colleges and 25 percent in high school adult classes if the "cap" had not been imposed, the "cap" was intended to curtail A.D.A. growth brought about in part by S.B. 90 and S.B. 6 (California Legislative Analyst, 1976). Under the "cap," A.D.A. grew 13 percent in the community colleges and 19 percent in the adult schools in 1975-76 (unpublished data from the California Community Colleges and the Department of Education). Costs for attendance growth above five percent were absorbed by the local districts. Arguments for extending the cap were weakened by strong political pressures from the institutions and the development of a large state budget surplus. The "cap" was removed after one year by the passage of S.B. 1641 (a bill described later in this section).

Assembly Bill 1821 (Chapter 1269, Statutes of 1975): This bill created regional adult and vocational education councils to review and make recommendations on adult and vocational education courses, in order to prevent what was labelled as "unnecessary duplication" of courses and services offered by the community colleges, the school districts and the regional occupational programs. Each council is also to reach a delineation of function agreement among the institutions and to conduct a region-wide needs assessment of skills in demand. Because the councils only came into effect as of July, 1976, and because most are still working out operating procedures, there is no record yet of any impact.

Senate Bill 1641 (Chapter 323, Statutes of 1976) and Assembly Bill 2790 (Chapter 991, Statutes of 1976) (a "trailer bill" to S.B. 1641): This finance legislation, designed as another effort to slow down the expansion of adult enrollments (and indirectly to reduce competition by removing the fiscal incentive for expansion), created a number of changes in the state and local financing of adult schools and community colleges. In order to reduce the fiscal incentive for school districts to expand low cost adult programs, S.B. 1641 prohibited school districts from diverting funds appropriated for adult A.D.A. for the support of the more expensive regular school programs. S.B. 1641 also established lower revenue limits for adult A.D.A. in the school districts, based on the cost of such A.D.A. (as determined largely by the school districts) during 1975-1976 (which was established as the base year). Since setting a lower revenue limit for adult enrollments resulted in a correspondingly higher limit for regular school enrollments, there was some incentive for school districts to benefit their regular programs by figuring the costs of adult programs as relatively low. For the community colleges, S.B. 1641/A.B. 2790

provided that any increases in the institutions' (total) average daily attendance above that for 1975-76 would receive an averaged state subsidy level which for many districts would be a lower level of funding than that provided for their 1975-76 "base" enrollment. S.B. 1641 also changed local financing of community college enrollments to a system that was linked to assessed property value rather than to size of enrollments; it was expected that this change would curtail enrollment growth. (An example of the calculation of state aid for a specific community college district under S.B. 1641 is provided in the appendix.)

The Cases

In the present study of adult education competition in California, the three geographic areas under examination differed in many respects from one another -- yet in some ways the similarities among them were striking. We shall portray community college-adult school interaction in each of these areas before turning to consider what generalizations concerning the development and effects of competition or conflict can be drawn from the comparison of the three cases.

Area "A": "Open Warfare" Over Adult Education

High conflict, antagonism and distrust marked relationships between the community college and the adult schools in area "A". An area in which large and strong adult schools long held a monopoly on the offering of adult classes, the schools and the community colleges were "playing different ball games," according to one respondent, until 1974 when the community college decided to initiate ungraded adult education classes. The result was "open warfare," as the adult schools tried to prevent the college from engaging in adult education.

Demographically, area "A" is part of the urban sprawl that extends out of the Los Angeles area. It is an area with relatively high population density and a large minority population, particularly Spanish-speaking. In terms of the assessed property value per student, the school districts in this area are among the very poorest in the state. Because they are poor, the school districts here receive a very large proportion of their revenue -- up to about 85 percent -- from the state, under the state's equalization formula. A survey a few years ago found that nearly half the adult population in one section of the area did not have a high school diploma. Average daily attendance (A.D.A.) of first through twelfth grade students has been declining for several years in most of the school districts in the area. Community college A.D.A. is expected to remain at a relatively constant level in the next few years, although in fall 1976, the college's A.D.A. dipped for the first time.

The community college in area "A" was established by special election in the mid-1940's and was built in the exact geographic center of its service area, a location outside of the urban centers. A special local tax override to pay for the new institution's capital outlay was passed with the support of the local school districts. The price of this support was an informal "gentleman's agreement" between the college and the schools, that the former would leave all adult education to the school districts. For nearly 30 years, the community college offered no adult education programs and very few off-campus credit classes, despite its distance from the population centers.

During this period, adult schools were established for eight of the school districts -- often only a few miles from one another. Today several adult schools are staffed by what many called "aggressive" --

and committed -- directors. These directors, by identifying the interests of a large part of the community and taking advantage of state finance formulas and federal grants, have built adult school enrollments that are among the largest in the state; one adult school had more than 7,000 A.D.A. in 1974-75. A relatively wide spectrum of adult programs are offered in the area although some adult schools specialize in particular subject areas. Since there are no residence restrictions on adult school enrollments in California, some of the more aggressive directors have sought to draw students from surrounding communities, sometimes evoking territorial conflicts. But, although the adult schools sometimes fought among themselves, they tended, as one adult school principal noted, to "band together like junior high boys at a dance" when others, such as the school districts or the community colleges, intruded.

In 1974, the community college so intruded when it announced that it planned to institute noncredit adult education classes and to expand its off-campus credit offerings. To head its adult education program, it hired a director away from one of the local adult schools. Why did the community college suddenly initiate adult education? According to community college administrators, it did so primarily because adult needs had changed with changes in the population, and the high school adult programs, large though they were, were not adequately meeting those needs in some sections of the college's service area. A secondary motive, admitted by some community college staff, was the fiscal incentive provided by state school finance formulas under S.B. 6 -- adult education enrollments were eligible for state funding at levels often higher than the actual costs of the classes. And community services classes, if transferred to an adult education program (as many then were) became

eligible for state support. [8] According to the adult schools, on the other hand, the community college started up adult education for just two basic reasons: the financial incentive and the need to add adult enrollments to shore up anticipated declines in 18-year old college enrollments. The adult schools argued that the college was duplicating adult school programs and trying to take them over -- particularly those that the adult schools had found to be successful. (Community college personnel, when asked why the adult schools had been expanding their programs tended to respond in almost identical terms. Thus, one college respondent argued, "These [adult school] people are more interested in A.D.A. [which increases the amount of state funds going to the district] than in what the district needs.")

The reaction of the adult schools to the community college's plans was to take the offensive in a united stand against the college. In an effort to avoid conflict, the college initially gave the schools the opportunity to veto classes they felt duplicated their own. Some schools then vetoed every course the college listed -- even those in geographic and content areas, according to the college, where the schools were not offering such programs. (The college then withdrew veto rights from the schools.) The college's noncredit adult education classes also apparently raised adult school suspicions regarding off-campus credit classes which the college had planned to offer; and, at the urging of the adult schools, the school districts refused to rent their facilities to the college for any classes. Finally, the adult schools turned to local state legislators for assistance, with arguments that the college was duplicating adult classes at additional cost to the state. These complaints helped lead to state legislation intended to curb the growth of adult enrollments

and to reduce "unnecessary duplication" between institutions (the budget "cap," S.B. 1641 and A.B. 1821). Under pressure from the adult schools and constrained by the "cap," the community college cut its plans for adult education classes and largely scrapped its intended move toward more off-campus credit classes.

Nevertheless, although the resulting program was much smaller than originally planned, the college did manage to maintain (and even to increase) its adult education classes and A.D.A. In 1976, it offered adult education courses such as reading skills instruction, conversational Spanish and drawing classes for senior citizens, apprenticeship instruction and physical fitness classes; these were all courses also being offered by the adult schools. The college maintained and increased its adult education program partly because it had already committed resources and personnel to the program and partly because the pressures on the college were not severe enough to prevent it from continuing modest growth. Nor did the college's entrance into the adult education arena cause adult school administrators to try to shift their own program emphases or recruitment patterns, according to the administrators. Yet the adult schools also continued to expand adult A.D.A.

At the end of 1976, conflict between the two sectors remained high, but it was somewhat lower than in 1974.

Area "B": Shifting Positions in Adult Education

In contrast to area "A", in area "B" it was the school districts which were challenging past arrangements concerning adult programs. The adult schools, which were established by the school districts only in the last nine years or less, had recently begun offering classes in subject area similar to those offered by the community college and, in

instances, had tried to push community college classes out of school facilities. Though friction and hostility between school and community college increased as a result, there was a sense that a new "balance" in who provides which adult programs will be attained.

Adult enrollments are much smaller in area "B" than in area "A"; the largest adult school in area "B" had an average daily attendance of less than 800 in 1974-75, while A.D.A. in the community college's "classes for adults" was about 350 in 1974-75. (Once again, we cannot determine the numbers of "adult students," as we defined them, in regular credit courses in the community college.) Area "B" is a small town/suburban region with a large number of retired persons. Compared to those in area "A", the school districts in this area receive a much lower proportion of their revenue from the state because, under the equalization formula referred to above, they are calculated to be wealthier. However, the wealth of the several school districts in this area varies considerably.

As in area "A", the community college in area "B" was established in the mid-1940's by special election. Unlike area "A", however, there was no "gentleman's agreement" that adult education be left to the schools. In fact, until the mid-1960's, only the community college provided adult education classes -- and it offered relatively few of them. Unlike area "A", the community college in "B" was able to rent classroom space for offering college credit classes off-campus in almost every high school in its district.

Beginning in the mid-1960's, a few adult schools were established by the local school districts. According to one adult school director, the community college was upset that adult schools had entered "its" jurisdiction; but the level of conflict appears to have been limited --

perhaps because both sectors had relatively small adult education programs. Subsequently, however, the adult schools began to expand, offering courses in program areas such as business, English as a Second Language, and conversational foreign languages -- all fields in which the college was already offering noncredit and/or credit courses (though not necessarily the same courses). Within the past five years, the community college began broadening the type of credit courses it offered. Some -- like "basic home management" or "you and the law" -- were well suited to the needs of adults in the community who were not interested in pursuing degree or certificate objectives.

The reasons given for the expansion of adult education programs in this area were similar to those given in area "A". Both sides said the other was fiscally motivated and that their own programs could provide adult education more cheaply (the adult schools) or better (the community colleges). For at least one school district, declining enrollments in first through twelfth grade were a major influence in its starting up adult classes; but in other school districts such enrollments were not declining.

As a result of the changes by both sectors, but particularly by the school districts, the latter began to perceive community college classes, both credit and noncredit, as being in conflict with their own -- or with classes they wanted to offer. Although for the most part their adult enrollments were still growing, several school districts now denied the community college use of their facilities, even for credit classes, or else raised the rental charges to exorbitant levels.

At the same time, however, the area of conflict began to be reduced by independent action from the local community college board. Responding to charges by Governor Brown that adult educators were offering "frill"

courses at state expense, the board went on record against such courses at the college -- especially many of those oriented to senior citizens. According to a college administrator, the local board saw in the Governor's statements a confirmation of its own attitudes concerning the value of adult education compared with "regular" academic and vocational programs and chose to cut back courses the board perceived as inappropriate. In fall 1976, a number of these noncredit classes were cut out of the curriculum, and overall enrollments in noncredit classes dropped 35 percent; a spokesperson at the college expected that the board would prevent many of the noncredit offerings for adults from being reinstated.

Local board attitude (and indirectly state legislation) was also probably the major influence on how much adult education the adult schools offered. It was the school boards (along with administrative personnel in the school districts) which determined how much adult education classes "really cost," and thus how much money they would get under provisions of Senate Bill 1641. For some adult schools, S.B. 1641 was "a boon," providing a good level of funding and a basis for expansion. But one adult school, where local attitude was less favorable, found its revenue limit cut sharply and had to pare down its enrollments. Another, where local voices had decried the expansion of adult education, had its minimum class size raised, with the result that a sizeable number of classes had to be cancelled.

Given the attitudes of the community college board, the college seems almost certain to turn over some adult classes to the adult schools -- at least to those ready and able to pick up the slack. Moreover, some respondents felt that the original council established under A.B. 1821 would consolidate the shift of adult education responsibility

toward the adult schools, thus reducing duplication and conflict over such adult education classes. On the other hand, the council will do little to reduce perceived conflict and competition with regard to the community college's credit classes.

In the case of area "B", conflict and competition did not appear to greatly affect adult classes in either sector (although local boards did). For the most part, in setting up adult classes, each institution just ignored what the others were doing.

Area "C": Living Within Largely Self-Imposed Limits

Careful avoidance of conflict characterizes relationships between community college and adult schools in area "C". Here, the two sides adopted different self-images and separate roles which greatly limited the amount of overlap in adult education. The community college largely stayed out of noncredit adult education and most other adult-oriented classes, and the adult schools generally avoided classes which are traditional parts of a community college curriculum, such as psychology or long-term vocational training programs. There was a readiness to compromise when questions of "whose responsiblity" did arise; but most often it was the community college which pulled back when such conflicts developed.

Area "C" covers a large geographic region which includes both urban and rural sections of central California. In the urban areas of the region, there are some fairly large adult school enrollments, with close to 2,000 A.D.A. in one adult school and about 650 in another in 1974-75. In the community college, on the other hand, there was only a tiny enrollment in noncredit classes for adults in 1974-75. Area "C" school districts are relatively low-health districts. Some of them receive up to about 50 percent of their revenue from the state under the state's equalization formula

(a percentage much lower then in area "A" but considerably higher than in area "B"). There is a sizeable Spanish-speaking population in the area.

Adult education classes were set up by the school district in the major urban area of area "C" more than 60 years ago. A second school district began adult education with district unification in 1960. Unlike those in areas "A" and "B", the community college in area "C" also was established as part of the largest school district and remained a part of the school district until the mid-1960's, when, pursuant to state legislation, it became part of a separate community college district. When the community college separated from the school district, a verbal agreement between the school district and the newly separate college was made: adult education would remain the responsiblity of the school district.

The urban adult schools have reminded the community college of that agreement when the latter has appeared to stray out of the boundaries set, and the college has then generally backed down. In 1976, for example, the community college developed several noncredit classes for senior citizens -- classes which the adult schools had expressed little interest in offering. But the adult schools complained that the college had intruded into their area and demanded that the classes be turned over to them. Although the college staff members resented the schools' approach -- "I'm not in the business of starting up classes for others," said one -- it agreed to turn over the classes to the schools. "We're good friends again," said the staff member. Usually, however, the college simply did not try to offer many noncredit adult education classes. Nor, compared to some other community colleges, did it offer many credit-bearing courses geared primarily to "adult students" (that is, to those not seeking to pursue degree or certificate programs).

To some extent, the adult schools backed down when the community college raised protests against proposed adult school courses. For example, an adult school gave up consideration of a particular vocational program when the college protested that it already offered the program.

Nevertheless, some friction and ill-feelings developed between the adult schools and the community college, especially due to the college's expansion of off-campus credit classes at a time when the urban area adult schools were expanding their adult programs. But, in spite of some feelings of intrusion, school districts permitted the college to rent school facilities for credit classes (though sometimes not in the city schools where adult school classes were being offered) since the schools did not feel seriously threatened. For the most part, conflicts and frictions remained below the surface -- showing up in adult schools' resentment of perceived community college "lack of entrance requirements" (since California community colleges may admit anyone over age 18 perceived as "able to benefit" from instruction), or the community college's resentment of what it saw as the adult schools' "propreitary" attitude toward all courses of potential interest to adults. Recent state legislation has appeared to have little impact on either the tensions or the division of functions between the two sectors -- although one college administrator speculated that the A.B. 1821 council, by bringing covert tensions to the surface, might actually "harden the territorial imperatives of the different segments."

Although there was relatively low conflict over adult programs and enrollments in area "C", neither was there real cooperation or coordination among the institutions. Rather, the institutions generally sought simply to avoid conflict; within the boundaries established, they went their own way.

The Development of Conflict Between Education Sectors

Conflict, Not "True" Competition

If competition is defined as "a situation in which the decision unit and at least one other seek to influence the behavior of a third party" (Thompson, 1967, p. 136), then there was competition between the adult schools and the community college in all three areas examined for all the institutions sought to attract adult students to courses which overlapped, at least in part and often substantially, with those of other institutions in their area. But since the untapped pool of potential students was large, "competition" emerging from overlap of functions did not appear to result in the drawing away of students already enrolled in other institutions. In fact with only a few exceptions, and those due primarily to factors such as local board attitudes (rather than to competition), in each area adult enrollments in both the adult schools and the community college expanded -- even as new competitors entered the scene. Indeed, the majority of institutional administrators denied that they were in competition with the other institutions. For these reasons, apparent competition and duplication were not the major factors affecting relations between the community college and the adult schools. For example, there were more duplicative or overlapping classes between the community college and the adult schools in area "B" than in area "A", but relations between the two sectors were far more strained and hostile in area "A".

On the other hand, conflict between the community college and the adult schools -- that is, suspicion, resentment and antagonism -- was present in each of the three areas. But the intensity of conflict differed considerably among the areas because of a number of specific conditions and forces.

Why Conflict

Conflict between the adult schools and the community college was present in all three areas because the ambiguous and overlapping roles of the two sectors created fears and uncertainties about what "the other side" might do. And conflict grew because incentives and commitments for gaining still more adult enrollments and dollars induced many institutions to seek to enter what had been others' "turf" or to try to kick others out of the adult area.

Overlapping roles, different institutions. Downs (1967) notes that an organization is extraordinarily sensitive to perceived incursions of its "territory" by another organization because it "usually cannot forecast all [the] possible ramifications [of the other's actions]. What looks trivial today may prove to be a major threat tomorrow" (p. 215). The overlap in functions between adult schools and community colleges in California, written into state law, caused each side to see the other as a threat. Even though the other side was not drawing their own students, institutions feared that this might eventually happen. And the ambiguity of just what was or was not an adult program made institutions uncertain as to whether or not another was in fact intruding on their turf. Given this uncertainty, institutions, particularly the adult schools, were likely to treat any changes in the other sector's course offerings as invasions of their territory. Moreover, Clark (1968) argues that, because of their market-oriented nature, adult education institutions must constantly adapt their programs to meet the changing interests of an unstable, voluntary population. Thus the adult schools and the community colleges were faced with the task of identifying territorial boundaries, their own and those of others, which were constantly in flux.

It was, then, the perceived threat of territorial invasion and the fear that enrollments might be lost to the other (and not actual damage from competition, of which there was little) that gave rise to friction between the adult schools and the community colleges. For example, the adult schools in area "A" which "redlined" all proposed off-campus community college classes, even in geographic and subject areas where they were not holding classes and had no authority to do so, feared that unless they redlined the courses the community college would gradually move into their own areas as well. Similarly, in order to protect their potential interests (but also to expand the boundaries of their territories), institutions at times demanded that others "get out of their area" even when they themselves could not or would not provide the programs being offered. Advertising campaigns and mass mailings, undertaken by institutions, also increased others' awareness of overlaps and sense of threat.

Because there was more overlap among adult schools than between adult schools and the community colleges, one might have expected greater conflict among the adult schools than between the two sectors. But this was not so. Though there was some competition and conflict among the adult schools, hostility toward a common "foe", the community college, united the adult schools. Because adult school administrators shared similar career backgrounds and faced similar "unfair community college advantages" -- the college's greater prestige, its higher per-student state subsidy and higher salary level for instructors, its larger taxation base -- they formed a more or less cohesive front "to keep the wolves out." (Similarly, community college personnel cited adult schools' "unfair tactics" in taking complaints to an outside force -- the state legislature,

their "unwarranted" refusal to rent facilities to the college, and their "proprietary" attitudes.) Also, in some areas, conflict between the adult schools was lessened by geographic distance between them.

By contrast, between the adult schools and the community college the distrust and misunderstanding of dissimilar institutions added to the conflict already generated by the overlap between them. As one adult school administrator remarked, "we tend to ascribe the attributes we fear to [the different sector]." Each side accused the other of the same unworthy motives for expanding adult programs -- in particular, of being in the adult field "only for the money" and/or to keep from firing unneeded teachers by transferring them to expanded adult programs. (On the other hand, most recipients claimed their own institutions were motivated primarily by a commitment to serve the community better.) Emotionally charged perceptions of the other sector -- what its given mission was, what it offered, who attended it — were present.

In addition, conflict was greater between the different sectors because each type of institution tended on the whole to recruit staff from somewhat different backgrounds, to socialize them toward different norms, and to develop different organizational loyalties.

Needs, rewards, and commitments. The self-interests of institutions and their administrators prompted many not only to defend against feared intrusions by others but also to expand their adult programs and enrollments. By themselves, program and enrollment expansions did not bring about greater conflict between sectors -- so long as others perceived institutional expansions as just adding "more of the same" enrollments in areas already agreed to "belong" to the institutions. But, because of the ambiguity of what was an adult program, the more institutions expanded

adult enrollments and developed new programs for them, the more likely they were to be perceived by others as intruding on the others' territories. For this reason the overall expansion of adult enrollments in the 1970's as a result of fiscal incentives, dependence on adult enrollments to maintain budget and staff levels, and institutional commitments to meet community demands appears to have increased conflict in many (but not in all) areas of the state.

Self-interests also prompted some administrators to deliberately enter what had been another's turf or to lay claim to exclusive rights for a field. When asked why both sectors should not continue to offer adult education programs since enrollments in both were expanding, one administrator replied, "We're a little greedy -- we want to do it all." By gaining a monopoly over adult offerings, these institutions hoped to increase their total revenues above what they could get when both sectors were offering adult programs.

By contrast, there were few rewards for institutions to coordinate their adult programs with others. Coordination among institutions might have reduced the psychic discomforts of conflict and might have produced more and better service to the adult clientele (and the institutions did claim a commitment to serving adults). But cooperative ventures required human energy. And, since economies of scale were rarely involved in the adult education programs, cooperation was unlikely to produce cost savings for the institutions.

Why Conflict Levels Differed

The level of conflict differed considerably among the three areas. The highest level of conflict of the three areas was present in area "A", where there was outright hostility between the sides as exemplified by

the school districts refusal to rent school facilities to the college, and the schools' resort to external powers (state legislators). Conflict was at an intermediate level in area "B", where the schools also refused to rent their facilities to the college or else charged it exorbitrant rates but did not go to outside forces for help. Rather, (largely because of the college board's actions) efforts to reach a new balance of functions between the college and the schools were being made. The lowest level of conflict of the three areas was in area "C", where verbal agreements on who offered what courses had been reached and, by and large, were being maintained. There were frictions between the parties in area "C", but there was also a readiness to compromise.[9)]

Differences in conflict levels appear to be only marginally affected by state policies. Rather, in the cases studied the differences were in large part due to idiosyncratic factors at the local level -- such as the attitudes of local board members and the personalities of local administrators. However, some non-idiosyncratic factors substantially affected conflict levels; the most important of these were whether or not the community college had been part of a school district, and whether school districts or the community college currently provided most adult education programs. No single set of factors accounted for conflict levels. Rather the extent of conflict in each area was determined by a combination of factors which differed from area to area.

Uncertain relationships. The degree of uncertainty about the other sector's future plans was the most immediate factor affecting the level of conflict in an area. The perceived breakdown of "agreements" concerning the division of programs between sectors, caused by change or perceived change in institutions' patterns of service to adults (as in areas "A" and "B"), increased the level of uncertainty and thus the

tensions and conflicts between the institutions.

Largely because hostility and fears were strongly influenced by uncertainty, the level of conflict in an area did not remain stable. In area "A", the level of conflict and hostility was greatest in 1974, before the community college had actually instituted many adult programs but when the adult schools were most in doubt about the extent of the college's planned move into adult education. Once the limited extent of college's intended move became clearer, the intensity of the conflict (that is, the extent of suspicion and efforts to eliminate the other party) dropped.[10] (Of course, the adult schools also used the tactic of conflict to help ensure that the college's move was limited.)

Local board attitudes toward adult education. When they acted as restraining influences on the scope and size of adult programs in one or both sectors, local school and community college boards had considerable influence on the level of conflict between sectors. In some cases, because local boards ascribed a relatively low value to the provision of services to adults, they reduced the expansion of adult programs in their institutions and so reduced potential conflicts with others over turf. In area "C" for example, according to a college administrator, the community college board took the position that noncredit adult education was not the function of the college. This position kept the college out of most of the adult area. In area "B", the community college board's decision to pull the college out of certain adult programs left the offering of these programs to the adult schools and so, again, reduced the area of conflict between the two sectors. Decisions of some school boards to set low revenue limits for adult education under S.B. 1641 may prevent those adult schools from challenging new classes set up by the community colleges.

Personalities. Among the most important factors affecting differences in conflict levels among the areas were what appeared to be largely fortuitous differences in the personalities and commitments of the individuals administering adult programs in the different regions. In explaining part of the reason why conflict between the education sectors was relatively low in his area, one adult school administrator argued that most of the adult program administrators in his area were "passive, they're not aggressive, they're not really committed to the concept of adult education -- so they're willing to compromise." By contrast, administrators in area "A", particularly those in the adult schools, described themselves and were described by others as highly aggressive, "empire-builders" and entrepreneurs. The more aggressive and committed adult program directors were, the more likely they were to seek to expand their program areas and therefore to run into conflict with other directors.

College origins. The origins of the local community college (that is, whether it was originally part of the school district or was established as a separate entity) affected the clarity of division of adult functions between the two sectors and how well agreements between the two were holding. Where the community college was originally integrated into the school district and had separated from it only in the 1960's, noncredit adult education functions tended to be handled almost entirely by one sector, usually the school district's adult schools. This was true in area "C" and in several other areas in the state, where mutual agreements that adult education remain with the school districts had been established at the time of the colleges' separation from the school districts. Because these agreements had been reached recently enough for the staff of the institutions to have personally participated in them, the agreements seemed

to be holding, by and large. In addition, because the split had occurred within the past dozen years, some community college and adult school staff members had at one time worked together with those in the other sector and so seemed to have better personal communication with the other sector than did administrators in other areas. By contrast, where the community colleges had been separate from the school districts for several decades, explicit agreements on divisions of adult services either had never been reached (as in area "B") or began to break down over time (as in area "A").

Which sector offers adult education. Another factor which appears to have affected the level of inter-institutional conflict was which sector had assumed the major role in providing noncredit adult education. Where the adult schools had been given or had assumed the major role, agreements between the sectors were holding better because the community colleges were less dependent on adult education enrollments than the adult schools and were more hesitant to upset relations over adult education. For the community colleges, adult education programs were the source of, at most, a very small part of community college enrollments. "We're not fighting very hard," explained a college administrator in area "C", "because we're not dependent on adult education. Our bread and butter is credit classes -- grades 13 and 14, and our enrollments have held up very well." Moreover, some community colleges (or at least their boards) were ambivalent about performing adult education functions. By contrast, in several areas where the community college had either been accorded or had assumed sole authority to offer adult education, the school districts had begun to challenge that arrangement, as incentives and needs for entering the adult field developed.

On the other hand, where the community college did challenge adult school monopoly over adult education, as in area "A", one would expect the

resulting tensions to be greater than where the adult schools were the challengers. Because the adult schools were totally dependent on adult enrollments, the adult schools had more to fear from an invasion of territory -- and were therefore more aggressive in defending (and expanding) their domain -- than the community colleges. For the adult schools, provision of adult education programs comprised their sole function -- but it was a function which, under the ambiguous Education Code, could be largely duplicated by the community college. The threat of loss of adult enrollments (whether realistic or not) was also of concern to those school districts which (at least prior to S.B. 1641) depended on low-cost adult enrollments to maintain staff and budget levels in the face of declining enrollments and rising costs. The director of one of the largest adult schools in the state argued, "...the financial well-being of our district relies on my ability in turfmanship to defend Adult Education programs in the district. Without the revenue from the adult program, the district could not meet our monthly budget...It's survival" (California Legislature, 1975a).

Enrollment changes. Decline of regular enrollments was not a major factor affecting differences in the levels of conflict among the three areas examined, even though such enrollment declines had occurred in a number of the school districts. Declining regular enrollments may prompt districts or institutions to seek out new state-supported adult enrollments in order to keep on current personnel and pay for fixed (or increasing) operating costs. But, as already noted, adult enrollment growth increases inter-institutional conflict only when it creates perceived changes in the division of functions. In area "C", the largest school district had experienced some slight decline in first to twelfth grade enrollments -- yet area "C" had the least conflict of the three areas,

and factors other than enrollment decline were probably responsible for much of the adult school's expansion. In area "B", one school district had purportedly started up adult education classes to make up for the drop in regular school enrollments, yet conflict was as high or higher between the community college and those school districts in area "B" where enrollments were still growing. In area "A", most of the school districts had suffered enrollment declines, and these declines put pressure on the adult schools to expand adult enrollments -- and defend them from community college takeovers. But conflict was increased only when the community college did enter the adult field -- for reasons mostly other than enrollment concerns.

Nevertheless, we suspect that enrollment decline may be affecting conflict levels in some areas of the state which were not examined, particularly in regions where a sector with declining regular enrollments has been excluded from the adult field. In areas where the school districts have been excluded from adult education, for example, declining regular enrollments appear to have prompted some of them to initiate adult classes -- thus breaking past agreements and so contributing to inter-institutional conflict. Moreover, enrollment decline may have a greater influence on conflict levels in the future if community college enrollments decline (as they have done in some community colleges this year) and if such declines encourage the colleges to enter adult areas where they formerly stayed out. On the other hand, recent state legislation has removed some of the fiscal incentive (and need) for districts to use adult enrollments to maintain current budget levels.

State legislation. State fiscal incentives to expand adult enrollments (such as those provided by S.B. 90 and S.B. 6) by themselves were insufficient to bring about increased conflict. However, when the

restraining influences of negative board attitude toward adult education and recent agreement on division of functions were absent, fiscal incentives were then able to have a very large impact on the intensification of conflict. In area "A", for example, the fiscal incentives provided by S.B. 6 appeared to be a major reason why the community college there started an adult education program and, by doing so, came into conflict with the established adult schools. The same appears to be true of several school districts in area "B". On the other hand, that same fiscal incentive did not prompt the community college in area "C" to initiate noncredit adult classes.

State legislation intended (in part) to reduce conflict and perceived duplication among institutions -- A.B. 1821 and S.B. 1641 -- to date has had very limited success in doing so. A final verdict on the legislation's effectiveness cannot be made yet, since the bills have only recently gone into effect. But it seems unlikely that they will have a sizeable or uniform impact on levels of conflict between education sectors. Why is this so? In the first place, the impact of the state legislation is dependent on intervening variables in each area -- the concerns and attitudes of local board members, the extent to which new enrollments are needed to retain teachers, the incentives of Federal programs, the status of the local economy, and so forth.

The effectiveness of state legislation in reducing conflict depends especially on how local boards choose to interpret and act on that legislation. For example, where S.B. 1641 prompted school boards to set low revenue limits for adult enrollments, expansion of adult programs -- and therefore the possiblity of new incursions into what the community college sees as its turf -- becomes less likely. But where the school boards supported the concept of adult education, they set what the adult school

administrators considered "quite adequate" revenue levels; for these administrators and for most in the community colleges, S.B. 1641 was a "pretty good deal." In fact, they saw it as a signal to expand programs which had been hurt by the "cap". (Yet, even where school districts set low revenue limits for adult enrollments, adult school-community college frictions might increase if the adult schools feel themselves in greater competition with the community college for the more limited range of lower-cost programs to which they are now restricted.)

In areas where there already are open communication channels and a willingness to compromise, A.B. 1821 may lessen inter-institutional conflicts over turf by bringing about a clearer separation of functions and in these areas it may induce institutions to scuttle plans for apparently duplicative programs even before such proposals are reviewed by the A.B. 1821 councils. But where antagonism and mistrust are already high, most participants believe that the A.B. 1821 councils will be unable to reach agreement over delineation of function. In these locales, a stalemate is likely to result, with decisions on programs required to be passed up to state authorities. Ironically, by forcing institutions to reach explicit and permanent assignments of specific courses, A.B. 1821 may increase the visibility of covert frictions and impede later maneuverability around problems.

Political compromises weakened state legislation's potential impact on conflict and duplication between education sectors. For example, during the political bargaining which resulted in S.B. 1641, penalties on institutional expansion of adult enrollments were considerably reduced. Also, A.B. 1821 and S.B. 1641 largely left existing programs and enrollments -- and conflicts -- as they were. The state bills were directed mostly at new programs and enrollments added to the present levels.

The frequent changing of state legislation -- and the expectation of change -- also weakened the impact of state policy intent on institutions. The "cap" might have had greater effect on institutions had it remained in force for more than one year; for the one year it operated, however, most institutions were able (and indeed were forced by its late enactment) to maintain their programs without extensive change. Institutional administrators have become cynical about any long-standing state policy. One community college president said, "When S.B. 6 was instituted, we thought it would last 25 years; two years later, everything was changed. There's no state policy."

On the other hand, there are some non-legislative state-level forces which may help reduce conflict between education sectors. Under impetus from the Governor and from board members recently appointed by him, the state-wide coordinating board for all California community colleges may develop stricter standards for approval of college credit courses -- standards which should lessen adult school charges that college credit courses are no different than the noncredit classes they offer. The Governor has also put public opinion pressures on local school and community college boards to reduce "frill"-type adult classes.

Other factors. A number of other factors also appear to have had some effect on conflict levels. The change of the school district or college chief executive could alter the institutional framework. In area "A", the appointment of a community college president more favorable to adult education helped initiate the college's move into adult education. Another factor may have been administrative structure. Where directors of adult programs had considerable autonomy from the rest of the system (as in area "A"), the quest for "empire building" may have been greater than

where adult programs were integrated into and under the control of the larger system.

The Relationship Between Competition/Conflict and Pattern of Service

Presumed "competition" between institutions with overlapping programs had little apparent effect on the institutions or on who was served or what was offered in classes for adults. Even though they were usually aware of the kinds of programs being offered by others, the institutions tended to develop their programs largely in isolation, irrespective of what any other institution in the area was offering. Each conducted its own informal and isolated "surveys" (or, more often, counted up the demands of vocal individuals) in determining what "the community" wanted. Most adult education administrators said that they did not modify their course offerings as a result of other institutions' starting up similar programs. Even fear and uncertainties of potential competition rarely induced institutions to change their programs or recruitment procedures, but most often simply prompted them to demand that others "get out" of the field. In short, in expanding adult enrollments, the institutions sought to attract students different from their own "regular" student bodies -- but not necessarily different from those in other adult programs.

Since demand for adult-oriented educational services appeared to rise as fast as or faster than institutions expanded to meet it, administrators could generally afford to ignore what other institutions offered. The majority of classes filled. There were exceptions, of course, since ultimately the adult student market is limited by adults' ability and interest in pursuing learning activities. Where distances were fairly large and the population relatively small, as in area "B", the addition of

a competing class in another locale sometimes resulted in two half-filled classes and so the cancellation of both, as some respondents in area "B" claimed had happened. Also, where hospital or other training facilities were limited, the addition of another competitor could harm one or both programs. But evidence that direct competition had, in fact, been the cause of class cancellations was slim. By and large, programs were not greatly harmed by "competition". Enrollments in an institution might have grown still more if others had not been offering similar programs, but they seldom shrank because of others' programs.

Data on the socio-economic characteristics of those in the adult programs were absent. However, based on fragmentary surveys and the perceptions of administrators, we tentatively conclude that the adult programs, whether or not they had competitors, generally drew students who were disproportionately white, middle-class, female, and more educated than the general population.[11] Because adult education is highly market oriented, courses tended to be developed to meet the demands of the most vocal and articulate, generally the relatively advantaged. Because the untapped pool of adults was large, administrators were not compelled to recruit new and harder-to-reach groups. Thus, the educationally and economically disadvantaged were underrepresented (as they are throughout the educational system). The administrators argued that, "We've tried -- all sorts of ways -- but we just can't bring in [larger numbers of minority-group adults]"; "they have a negative stereotype of school -- they just won't come"; "it's just not profitable" to try to recruit hard-to-reach groups; "it's not the structure that makes the difference."

Most institutions providing adult education offered courses in physical fitness, typing and other business subjects, and perhaps conversational language classes -- because these were classes for which a continual demand

was generally discernible. Also, there undoubtedly was some imitation of other institutions' "successful" programs (as some administrators charged). One institution's success in starting up classes for senior citizens, for example, appeared to prompt others to try similar courses. On the other hand, there were too few short-term vocational training programs, according to some adult educators -- perhaps because such programs tended to be relatively expensive. Given demographic statistics, there also appeared to be too few adult basic education classes. In some places, the number of adult basic education classes had grown comparatively little while those in more "popular" subjects had expanded rapidly.

Nevertheless, although competition per se appeared to have little effect on diversity among adult programs and students, the mere presence of several providers of adult programs appeared to increase the chance that programs would differ, that the range of students attracted would be somewhat wider, and that the total number of adults enrolled in classes would be larger. There were some differences in types of programs offered. There were also differences in the nature of students enrolled by different institutions in the same geographic area -- not because of conscious and deliberate institutional efforts to develop programs or recruit students different from those in other institutions, but largely because of the particular concerns of particular administrators and local boards. The more institutions providing adult services there were, the more likely it was that there would be administrators and local boards with differing concerns and approaches to the education of adults. In one institution an administrator's commitment to adult basic education led to a heavy emphasis on such courses, while another's interest in vocational programs brought about an emphasis in that area. On the other hand, where only one institution or sector offered adult programs, or where responsibility for

adult offerings was sharply differentiated, disinterest in offering certain programs by the sole institution and board given the authority to do so probably ensured that those programs would not be provided at all. In area "C", for example, community college administrators indicated they would be very hesitant in the future to offer noncredit classes for senior citizens (the agreed-upon responsibility of the adult schools) -- even if the adult schools were uninterested in offering such classes.

Even when quite similar programs are offered by the community college and the adult schools, it is likely that they do attract somewhat different clientele. A national study found that when individuals used educational institutions for adult learning they tended to take classes in institutions at the next educational level above that which they had attained in formal schooling -- most often in public high schools for those with less than a high school diploma, and in community colleges (or other higher education institutions) for those with at least a high school diploma (Carp et al., 1974).

The more alternative adult programs there were, the larger the total number of adult enrollments (and thus the greater the state and local costs for adult programs) appeared to be. This was so because even slightly different emphases or time or locations permitted a greater saturation of a ready market. (One would expect, also, that where there were several program heads, the ambitions of each to build sizeable programs would result in greater total enrollments than where there was only one program head.)

Because the institutions were not fighting over an exhausted pool of individuals, the conflicts between them did not appear to cause them much harm -- even in area "A", which had the highest conflict level.

Conflicts created tensions and administrators spent time trying to reduce or deal with these tensions. Institutions tried to reduce conflicts in several ways, each with its costs. They sought to reach a compromise with the other party, or they simply tried to stay well out of what the other side considered its territory, as in area "C" -- even if this meant imposing limits on their own functional boundaries. They also sought to enlist the aid of state law on their side. Not only did administrators (especially in area "A") lobby for state laws that they hoped would eliminate potential competitors, but the majority of those interviewed wanted stronger state guidelines that would more clearly separate the functions of each sector. Yet since the conflicts were not very destructive, they could be lived with by the institutions.

Finally, if by "unnecessary duplication" we mean half-filled classes and therefore reduced efficiency of operation, there was little such "unnecessary duplication" because most classes did fill. Where they did not, they were usually cancelled. On the other hand (as the adult schools frequently argued) having both community college and adult schools operate presumably identical classes may have resulted in "unnecessary costs" to the state and local taxpayers, since the community colleges tended to have higher salary costs. Whether two classes in fact were identical or differed in level, quality, or other criteria (as the community colleges argued) was impossible for us to determine.

Conclusion

In the United States, the expansion of schooling services are no longer viewed by policy-makers as automatically being in the public interest. The disenchantment with education arises both from the rapidly escalating cost of education and new doubts about the efficacy of schooling in promoting either individual mobility or social progress.

Public officials at all levels are now keenly interested in promoting "efficiency" in education. The possibility that educational institutions are unnecessarily duplicating services, and hence wasting money, makes these institutions tempting targets for inquiry and reform. On the other hand, some would caution that an unrestrained campaign against institutional competition in education will chill institutional creativity and/or prevent institutions from reaching the poor and disadvantaged populations who have benefitted least from past education experiences.

On the basis of our limited study in California, several observations can be emphasized that are relevant to the foregoing concerns:

(1) The California Legislature responded to the existence of conflict among institutions on the grounds that the presence of conflict between high schools and community colleges was a sign that unnecessary program duplications exist. Yet, our study indicates that the phenomenon of conflict is largely decoupled from the presence of program overlap or from competition for a limited market. Conflict is primarily cuased by anticipated attempts by one level of educational institutions to infringe upon the turf of another level.[12)]

Degree of conflict is relatively insensitive to program overlaps among institutions at the same level (e.g., among high school adult programs).

On the other hand, high levels of conflict seem to be triggered by the mere suspicion that institutions from a different level may seek to change existing delineations of functions. In these cases, conflict ensues even when the "threatened" institutions have no intention of offering the services envisioned by their "competitors". Thus, conflict levels are poor and often misleading indicators of program overlap.

(2) There does not appear to be an adequate basis for determining programmatic overlap between institutions. At present, the degree of overlap can be gauged only on an impressionistic basis.

A judgment concerning overlap among courses must be based on a precise knowledge of both the content of each course and the level of sophistication at which the course content is taught. The means of comparing these two elements among various courses is not currently established.

(3) It is by no means clear that institutional competition fosters creativity or stimulates outreach to previously unserved populations. Information concerning the characteristics of populations served by competing adult education programs is virtually non-existent in California. Planning and course development occur in each institution largely oblivious of similar processes in other districts and colleges. As long as "easy to reach" populations fill up new classes, there is no incentive to serve "hard to reach" populations.

In the last five years state policy in adult education for California has relied on a) fiscal devices designed to limit accelerating costs and b) the creation of new regional councils with the hope that such councils would succeed in eliminating duplicative courses and in delineating functions between adult schools and community colleges. It is too soon to adequately assess the effects of either the new fiscal formulas or the councils.[13)]

Because of other pressing problems, including the Serrano v. Priest decision of school finance, it is unlikely that the Legislature will return to questions of competition and conflict in adult education before 1978 or 1979. In the meantime, a policy relevant agenda at the state level would focus on two domains.

A. The regional Adult and Vocational Education Councils (RAVEC). Created by the Legislature to discharge a limited function largely restricted to non-credit courses, the RAVEC's may evolve into a significant governance mechanism. In theory, RAVEC's are capable of responding to local traditions concerning delineation of function, while, at the same time, allowing factors other than the self-interest of individual districts to influence their decisions. However, the RAVEC's face numerous difficulties including an ambiguous charter, some local hostility, lack of adequate staff and some inconsistency in policy guidance given by the State Department of Education and the office of the State Chancellor for the Community Colleges. In particular, the RAVEC's must deal with the absence of established mechanisms for determining the existence of programmatic overlap. Research that illuminated the successes and failures of RAVEC's in identifying and eliminating unnecessary program overlaps would be of substantial interest at the state level.

B. Continuation of tuition-free education for adults. California is unique among the states in its continuation of tuition-free education at the community college level. The absence of tuition probably plays an important role in stimulating enrollment in both community colleges and adult schools. A comprehensive study

of community college finance is now being completed by the California Postsecondary Education. However, continuing research will be required to explore the desirability and feasibility of requiring some adult students to bear a portion of the cost of their instruction. In particular, more data is needed on the socio-economic characteristics of students currently enrolled in various types of adult and vocational education courses.

Interest in the foregoing issues is largely limited to California. However, the relationship among compeition, overlap and conflict among educational institutions represent a cluster of issues of national interest. California represents one configuration of competing institutions that tends to focus attention at the high school-community level within the public sector. Other states present other configurations and different institutional histories and political coalitions. The study of other states would help to put the California situation into perspective and to reveal the major variations that occur in the nexus between competition, conflict, and program overlap among educational institutions and the relationship of these factors to declining enrollments.

The appendices illustrate the operation of California finance formulas for the community colleges prior to the enactment of SB 1641 (Appendix A) and the effects of SB 1641 on districts of varying ADA and assessed valuation under conditions of growth in ADA (Appendix B) and decline in enrollment (Appendix C).

APPENDIX A

FOUNDATION PROGRAM APPORTIONMENT PROCEDURE (PRE-SB 1641)
(Excluding Nondistrict Allowance)

Fiscal Services
012477

APPORTIONMENT FACTORS	DISTRICTS			
	A	B	C	D
1. Resident ADA:				
a. Other Than Defined Adult (OTDA)	5,000	7,500	1,500	1,500
b. Defined Adult (DA)	5,000	2,500	300	300
c. Total	10,000	10,000	1,800	1,800
2. Modified Assessed Value (MAV)	$750,000,000	$2,000,000,000	$99,000,000	$450,000,000
3. MAV/ADA	$ 75,000	$ 200,000	$ 55,000	$ 250,000
4. Foundation Program/ADA:				
a. Other Than Defined Adult	$ 1,143	$ 1,143	$ 1,143	$ 1,143
b. Defined Adult	637	637	637	637
5. District Aid/ADA:				
a. Other Than Defined Adult:				
(MAV x .0039) ÷ OTDA ADA	$ 585	$ 1,040	$ 257	$ 1,170
b. Defined Adult:				
(MAV x .0024) ÷ OTDA ADA	$ 360	$ 640	$ 158	$ 720
6. State Aid/ADA:				
a. OTDA (4.a - 5.a ≥ $125)	$ 558	$ 125	$ 886	$ 125
(1) Basic Aid	125	125	125	125
(2) Equalization Aid	433	—	761	—
b. Defined Adult (4.b - 5.b ≥ $125)	$ 277	$ 125	$ 479	$ 125
(1) Basic Aid	125	125	125	125
(2) Equalization Aid	152	—	354	—
7. Apportionment	$ 4,175,000*	$ 1,250,000*	$ 1,472,700*	$ 225,000*
a. Basic Aid (Line 1.c x $125)	1,250,000	1,250,000	225,000	225,000
b. Equalization Aid	2,925,000	—	1,247,700	—

*Line 1.a times line 6.a plus line 1.b times line 6.b. NA=Not applicable

APPENDIX B SB 1641 APPORTIONMENT PROCEDURE (GROWTH ADA SITUATION)
(Excluding Nondistrict Allowance and Demographic Factor)

Fiscal Services
012477

APPORTIONMENT FACTORS	DISTRICTS			
	A	B	C	D
1. Prior Year Resident ADA	9,804	9,804	1,765	1,765
2. Growth ADA (Assumed 2%)	196	196	35	35
3. Current Year Resident ADA	10,000	10,000	1,800	1,800
4. Prior Year State Aid (PYSA)	$3,860,000	$1,225,000	NA	NA
5. Prior Year Average State Aid Rate (ASAR)	$ 500	$ 500	$ 500	$ 500
6. a. State MAV/State ADA	$ 105,000	$ 105,000	$ 105,000	$ 105,000
b. District MAV/District ADA	$ 75,000	$ 200,000	$ 55,000	$ 250,000
c. District Equalization Factor (DEF)(1 ÷ 2)	1.400	0.525	1.909	0.420
7. Small District Multiplier (SDM)	NA	NA	1.275	1.275
8. Current Year State Aid/ADA for Prior Year Level of ADA				
a. Districts ≥ 3001 ADA:				
(1) (PYSA)(Inflation)(DEF)	$ 324,240	$ 38,588	NA	NA
(2) Add 8.a.(1) to PYSA	$4,184,240	$1,263,588	NA	NA
(3) State Aid/ADA	$ 426.79	$ 128.88	NA	NA
b. Districts ≤ 3000 ADA:				
(SDM)(ASAR)(Inflation)(DEF)	NA	NA	$ 1,290.01	$ 283.82
9. Current Year State Aid per Growth ADA				
a. Districts ≥ 3001 ADA:				
(ASAR)(Inflation)(DEF)	$ 742.00	$ 278.25	NA	NA
b. Districts ≤ 3000 ADA:				
Same as 8.b.			$ 1,290.01	$ 283.82
10. Apportionment	$4,329,672*	$1,318,125*	$2,322,018**	$ 510,876**
a. Basic Aid (line 3 x $125)	1,250,000	1,250,000	225,000	225,000
b. Equalization Aid	3,079,672	68,125	2,097,018	285,876

*Line 2 times line 9.a. plus line 8.a.(2).
**Line 3 times line 9.b.

NA=Not applicable

APPENDIX C SB 1641 APPORTIONMENT PROCEDURE (DECREASED ADA SITUATION)
(Excluding Nondistrict Allowance and Demographic Factor) Fiscal Services 013177

APPORTIONMENT FACTORS	DISTRICTS A	DISTRICTS B
1. Prior Year Resident ADA	9,804	1,765
2. Decreased ADA (Assumed 2%)	(196)	(35)
3. Current Year Resident ADA	9,608	1,730
4. Prior Year State Aid (PYSA)	$ 3,860,000	NA
5. Prior Year Average State Aid Rate (ASAR)	NA	$ 500
6. a. State MAV/State ADA	$ 107,500	$ 107,500
b. District MAV/District ADA	$ 78,060	$ 57,225
c. District Equalization Factor (DEF) (1 ÷ 2)	1.377	1.879
7. Small District Multiplier (SDM)	NA	1.275
8. District Prior Year State Aid Rate (DPYSAR)	$ 391.72	NA
9. Current Year State Aid/ADA		
a. Districts ≥ 3001 ADA:		
(1) Line 2 times line 8	$ 76,777	NA
(2) Line 4 minus line 9.a.(1)	$ 3,783,223	NA
(3) [9.a.(2)] (Inflation)(DEF)	$ 312,570	NA
(4) Add 9.a.(3) to 9.a.(2)	$ 4,095,793	NA
(5) State Aid/ADA	$ 426.29	NA
b. Districts ≤ 3000 ADA: (SDM)(ASAR)(Inflation)(DEF)	NA	1,269.73
10. Apportionment	$ 4,095,793*	$ 2,196,633**
a. Basic Aid (line 3 x $125)	1,201,000	216,250
b. Equalization Aid	2,894,793	1,980,383

*Same as line 9.a.(4).
**Line 3 times line 9.b.

NA = Not applicable

Footnotes

[1]In California, "adult schools," offering "classes for adults," are separate institutions within unified or high school districts. Adult schools have their own principals and faculties and frequently have their own facilities. (Some adult classes are operated and directed by regular high schools in locales where adult enrollments are limited.)

[2]Average daily attendance (A.D.A.), based on the total number of pupil hours of attendance divided by 525, is the measure used by the state to determine funding levels for the secondary schools and the community colleges.

[3]During the same period, adult A.D.A. in high school and county regional occupational centers and programs (another part of the secondary school system) rose 284 percent, to 55,961 A.D.A.

[4]"Defined adults" were students who were 21 years or older and taking fewer than ten class hours per week. As we shall note below, many "other than defined adult" students, enrolled in regular degree-credit college classes, had non-degree, non-certificate "adult" objectives. Partly for this reason, state legislation in 1976 eliminated the distinction between "defined adults" and "other than defined adults" in the community colleges. Between 1970-71 and 1974-75, total community college A.D.A. rose 32 percent (to 682,534) (California Legislative Analyst, 1976).

[5]However, data on ethnicity are collected for regular school enrollments and for community college enrollments as a whole.

[6]In 1976, state legislation eliminated the designation "classes for adults" in the community colleges (but not in the secondary school system). Henceforth, the institutions will designate these classes simply as non-credit or ungraded community college classes.

[7]The typical range of adult education course offerings in a large adult school includes such classes as English as a Second Language, citizenship, bookkeeping, bookkeeping, shorthand, typing, conversational foreign languages, social science, general mathematics, physical fitness, sewing, gardening, stained glass crafts, guitar, and woodworking. Such schools have large vocational programs including those for cosmetology, automotive repair, dental assistance, and data processing. A community college may offer some or all of the above classes and programs, although it is likely to offer fewer basic skills and crafts courses and many more longer-term vocational/technical programs (generally as part of the regular college curriculum, rather than in special adult classes).

[8]Keim (1976) argues that community colleges nationwide have been changing most non-credit community services programs to "continuing education" programs "which are coincidentally eligible for the desired state apportionment funds" (p. 8).

[9]In general terms, area "A" might be characterized as a "political" conflict, area "B" as a "bargaining" conflict and area "C" as a situation where "persuasion" is used. March and Simon define these three strategies as follows: "In the strategy of "politics" persistent differences in goals are assumed and at least one of the parties deliberately expands the arena of conflict so as to enlist the aid of outside forces, such as government arbitrators. In the strategy of "bargaining," which also assumes persistent differences in goals, a compromise is sought through the use of threats, falsification of position, concessions, and general gamesmanship. In the strategy of "persuasion," it is assumed that the agents have common deep-level goals and that disagreement over subgoals can be mediated by reference to common objectives"(March and Simon, 1958, p. 129-130).

[10]In fact, because the level of conflict in an area does not remain constant, the judgments of the experts used to select the cases turned out to be inaccurate. On the absis of experts' descriptions, area "B" was originally selected to be the "most cooperative" of the three areas, while area "C" was expected to show an intermediate level of inter-institutional conflict. Because conflict is a subjective phenomenon, the level of conflict can be intensified by a particular incident whose significance -- and impact -- may fade in a month.

[11]A survey of a sample of California adults, conducted for the California Legislature, found that "part-time learners" participating in any kind of education "beyond high school" (in adult schools, colleges or universities or in non-educational organizations and nonformal programs) were disproportionately younger, white, in white-collar occupations, relatively well-educated and economically well-off (Hefferlin et al., 1975). Studies conducted by the Educational Testing Service (Carp et al., 1974) and the U.S. National Center for Educational Statistics (Okes, 1976) on national samples of adult students similarly found a disproportionate number of the relatively advantaged.

[12]Declining enrollments play a modest and secondary role in fostering either competition or conflict. Past patterns of institutional cooperation, the nature of fiscal incentives, policies adopted by local boards, the degree of entrepreneurial zeal of local administrators all seem equally if not more important than declining enrollment.

[13]It can be reported that first reports on fall 1976 community college ADA indicates a drop of 6 percent on a statewide basis. However, the termination of certain veterans benefits may be playing the central role in causing this enrollment shift.

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